

CLAIMS

1. A wheelbarrow comprising an electric motor with a mechanical coupling to a wheel, the electric motor controlled to selectively drive the wheel when required and allow that wheel to freely rotate when not driven by the electric motor.
2. A wheelbarrow as claimed in claim 1 wherein the electric motor is controlled by a switch.
3. A wheelbarrow as claimed in claim 2 wherein the switch is of a hold to sustain operation type, to allow an operator to determine whether the wheel is driven or not.
4. A wheelbarrow as claimed in any of claims 1, 2 or 3 wherein the electric motor is controlled by a status sensor.
5. A wheelbarrow as claimed in claim 4 wherein the status sensor senses wheelbarrow speed and/or barrow load and/or travel angle in order to determine whether the wheel is driven.
6. A wheelbarrow as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the electric motor is detachable.
7. A wheelbarrow as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the mechanical coupling is a chain or belt between the wheel and the electric motor.
8. A wheelbarrow as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the wheel has a sprocket cog for mechanical coupling from the electric motor.
9. A wheelbarrow as claimed in claim 8 wherein the sprocket cog is sized relative to a drive cog coupled to the electric motor such that there is appropriate

mechanical advantage to enable the wheel to be driven.

10. A wheelbarrow as claimed in claim 9 wherein the mechanical advantage between the sprocket cog and the drive cog may be altered by a user.

11. A wheelbarrow as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the electric motor is coupled to a detachable electrical battery.

12. A wheelbarrow as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the electrical battery is rechargeable.

13. A wheelbarrow as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the electric motor and/or any electrical battery are held in waterproof mountings.

14. A wheelbarrow as claimed in any preceding claim wherein a mounting for the electric motor is able to receive motors of differing power as required by expected operational requirements.

15. A wheelbarrow substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

16. A drive mechanism for retro fit to a wheelbarrow, the mechanism comprising an electric motor, a battery and mechanical coupling for coupling the electric motor to a wheel, the electric motor controlled by a control switch to allow selective driving of the wheel when required and allow relative free rotation of the wheel when not.

17. A mechanism as claimed in claim 16 wherein the mechanism will incorporate a sprocket cog to be secured to a hub of a wheel to which the mechanical coupling is provided for coupling the motor to the wheel.

18. A mechanism as claimed in claim 16 or claim 17 wherein an electric motor is fitted in a suitable position to allow a drive train to be connected to the wheel of the wheelbarrow.

19. A mechanism as claimed in claim 18 wherein the drive train can consist of two sprockets, one with a small sprocket and a ratchet system fitted to the centre (similar to a bicycle free rear wheel).

20. A mechanism as claimed in claim 18 or claim 19 wherein the drive train is fitted to a shaft of a gearbox which is driven by an electric motor.

21. A mechanism as claimed in any of claims 16 to 19 wherein a larger sprocket is fixed to the shaft attached to the wheel on a wheelbarrow, or directly onto the side of the wheel.

22. A mechanism as claimed in claim 19 and any claim dependent thereon wherein a chain is fitted between the two sprockets to enable the electric motor to drive the wheel on the wheelbarrow.

23. A mechanism as claimed in any of claims 16 to 21 wherein a rechargeable battery is fitted on the underside of the wheelbarrow and this can be of a plug in type so that as one battery is exhausted a second battery, which has been charged, can be plugged into a socket which connects it to suitable electrical switchgear.

24. A mechanism as claimed in claim 23 wherein the battery can then be connected to a bell type press switch which is fitted adjacent to one of the handles of the wheelbarrow.

25. A mechanism as claimed in claim 24 wherein when the bell switch is pressed contact is made through wiring to the electric motor.

26. A drive mechanism for retro fit to a wheelbarrow substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

27. Any novel subject matter or combination including novel subject matter disclosed herein, whether or not within the scope of or relating to the same invention as any of the preceding claims.